AMENDMENTS

In the Claims

The following is a marked-up version of the claims with the language that is underlined ("___") being added and the language that contains strikethrough ("—") being deleted.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for transparent file proxying, the method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

coupling a plurality of computing devices to a local area network, at least one of said plurality of computing devices including ~~the~~ an ability to route communication packets to said remaining plurality of computing devices, each of said plurality of computing devices including a memory element containing a plurality of files;

coupling said at least one of said plurality of computing devices to a wide area communication network;

coupling a remote memory element to said wide area communication network~~, said remote memory element configured to maintain a file selected from said plurality of files contained in the memory elements of each of said plurality of computing devices~~;

coupling a remote computing device to said remote memory element, said remote memory element configured to maintain a copy of a first file selected from said plurality of files contained in the memory elements of said plurality of computing devices if a first user of the remote computing device is authorized access to the first file;

intercepting, in said remote memory element, an Internet Protocol (IP) communication message from said remote computing device, said IP communication message corresponding to a request from the first user to access said first file; and

providing said ~~selected~~ copy of said first file to said remote computing device when said remote memory element intercepts said IP communication message from said remote computing device if said IP communication message requests said ~~selected~~ first file from one of said plurality of computing devices connected to said local area network, thus providing said copy of said first ~~selected~~ file to said remote computing device without said IP communication message traversing said wide area communication network and said local area network.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one of said plurality of computing devices periodically updates said selected file maintained in said remote memory element.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said selected file is chosen to be maintained in said remote memory element based upon any of a plurality of policies.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein said plurality of policies are chosen from the group consisting of user policies, group policies and corporate policies.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said remote memory element updates said selected file and causes a file located in said plurality of files and corresponding to said selected file to be updated.

6. (Currently Amended) A system for transparent file proxying, comprising:

a local network to which is coupled a plurality of computing devices, at least one of said plurality of computing devices including the ability to route communication packets to

said remaining plurality of computing devices, each of said plurality of computing devices including a memory element containing a plurality of files;

a communication network coupled to said at least one of said plurality of computing devices;

a remote memory element coupled to said communication network ~~and configured to maintain a selected file selected from said plurality of files contained in the memory elements of each of said plurality of computing devices~~;

a remote computing device connected to said remote memory element, said remote memory element configured to intercept an Internet Protocol (IP) communication message from said remote computing device, said remote memory element configured to maintain a copy of a first file selected from said plurality of files contained in the memory elements of said plurality of computing devices if a first user of the remote computing device is authorized access to the first file; and

wherein said remote memory element is configured to provide said ~~selected~~ copy of the first file to said remote computing device when said remote memory element intercepts said IP communication message from said remote computing device, said IP communication message corresponding to a request from the first user to access said first ~~requesting said selected~~ file from one of said plurality of computing devices connected to said local network, thus providing said ~~selected~~ copy of the first file to said remote computing device without said IP communication message traversing said communication network and said local area network.

7. (Original) The system of claim 6, wherein said at least one of said plurality of computing devices periodically updates said selected file maintained in said remote memory element.

8. (Original) The system of claim 6, wherein said selected file is chosen to be maintained in said remote memory element based upon any of a plurality of policies.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein said plurality of policies are chosen from the group consisting of user policies, group policies and corporate policies.

10. (Original) The system of claim 6, wherein said remote memory element updates said selected file and causes a file located in said plurality of files and corresponding to said selected file to be updated.

11. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a program for transparent file proxying, the program comprising logic configured to perform the steps of:

coupling a plurality of computing devices to a local area network, at least one of said plurality of computing devices including ~~the~~ an ability to route communication packets to said remaining plurality of computing devices, each of said plurality of computing devices including a memory element containing a plurality of files;

coupling said at least one of said plurality of computing devices to a wide area communication network;

coupling a remote memory element to said wide area communication network~~, said remote memory element configured to maintain a file selected from said plurality of files contained in the memory elements of each of said plurality of computing devices~~;

coupling a remote computing device to said remote memory element, said remote memory element configured to maintain a copy of a first file selected from said plurality of files contained in the memory elements of said plurality of computing devices if a first user of the remote computing device is authorized access to the first file;

intercepting, in said remote memory element, an Internet Protocol (IP) communication message from said remote computing device, said IP communication message corresponding to a request from the first user to access said first file; and

providing said ~~selected~~ copy of said first file to said remote computing device when said remote memory element intercepts said IP communication message from said remote computing device if said IP communication message requests said ~~selected~~ first file from one of said plurality of computing devices connected to said local area network, thus providing said copy of said first ~~selected~~ file to said remote computing device without said IP communication message traversing said wide area communication network and said local area network.

12. (Original) The program of claim 11, wherein said at least one of said plurality of computing devices periodically updates said selected file maintained in said remote memory element.

13. (Original) The program of claim 11, wherein said selected file is chosen to be maintained in said remote memory element based upon any of a plurality of policies.

14. (Original) The program of claim 13, wherein said plurality of policies are chosen from the group consisting of user policies, group policies and corporate policies.

15. (Original) The program of claim 11, wherein said remote memory element updates said selected file and causes a file located in said plurality of files and corresponding to said selected file to be updated.

16. (New) A computer-implemented method for providing a file to a remote computing device operated by a first user, the file being stored within a local area network, the remote computing device communicating with the local area network via a communication link provided by a wide area network, said method comprising:

storing a copy of the file within the wide area network if the first user of the remote computing device is authorized access to the file such that a copy of the file is not stored within the wide area network if the first user is not authorized access to the file;

intercepting, within the wide area network, an Internet Protocol (IP) communication message from the remote computing device, the IP communication message corresponding to a request from the first user to access the file stored within the local area network; and

providing the copy of the file to the remote computing device without allowing the IP communication message to be provided to the local area network.

17. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 16, wherein:

the local area network is a first local area network; and

the wide area network comprises a second local area network.

18. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 16, further comprising:

periodically updating the file stored within the local area network to mirror the copy stored in the wide area network.

19. (New) The computer-implemented method of claim 16, wherein, in storing a copy of the file within the wide area network, the copy is stored by a remote memory element, the remote computing device communicating with the remote memory element.